

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

281242Z Jun 04

UNCLAS AMMAN 005278

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: JORDAN'S SECURITY COURT CLEARS OUT MORE CASES
AGAINST ZARQAWI AND HIS AFFILIATES

REF: A. AMMAN 00610

[B](#). AMMAN 03303

[C](#). OSLO 01137

[D](#). AMMAN 02633

SUMMARY

1. (U) Jordan's State Security Court has ruled in a number of terrorism cases involving al-Qa'ida/Abu Musab al-Zarqawi-related anti-U.S. plots in Jordan in recent weeks. On June 23, the Court affirmed its guilty verdict (first handed down in September 2000) against ten men accused of plotting attacks during Jordan's millennial celebrations, sentencing two to death. On June 16, the Court sentenced Ahmad al-Riyati and eight men being tried in absentia (including Zarqawi and reputed Ansar al-Islam leader Mullah Krekar) to prison. In mid-May, the Court also found guilty three Jordanians -- including Zarqawi's nephew -- for plotting under Zarqawi's direction against American and Israeli tourists. Unsurprisingly, lawyers in all three cases have indicated that they will appeal the verdicts. End Summary.

COURT UPHOLDS GUILTY VERDICT FOR MILLENNIAL PLOTTERS

2. (U) The State Security Court on June 23 once again handed down guilty verdicts to 10 men accused of planning attacks against tourists in Jordan during the millennial celebrations in 2000 (ref a). Two men, Khader Abu Hoshar and Usama Husni received death sentences, and the court sentenced the remaining eight to jail terms ranging from seven and one half years to life in prison. According to press reports, the defendants became enraged and cursed the judge when he read the verdict. The Court of Cassation overturned the State Security Court's guilty verdict last year stating that some of the defendant's convictions should have been included in a 1999 royal amnesty. The State Security Court justified its renewed guilty verdicts by saying: "the defendants continued their illegal activities after the royal amnesty was issued," according to press reports. The mens' defense attorney said they would appeal.

TRIED IN ABSENTIA, MULLAH KREKAR, ZARQAWI GET 15 YEARS

3. (U) On June 16, the court sentenced Jordanian national Ahmad al-Riyati, who was charged with plotting attacks against U.S. and Israeli targets in Jordan as well as Jordanian security forces, and eight others being tried in absentia to 15-year prison terms (refs b and c). The court immediately reduced al-Riyati's sentence because he "is supporting a family and to give him a second chance to improve himself," according to the verdict. The nine men are accused of belonging to the outlawed Ansar al-Islam and having ties to al-Qa'ida. Najmeddin Farj Ahmad (aka Mullah Krekar) and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi were among those sentenced in absentia. Riyati's defense lawyer told reporters that his client would appeal the verdict.

ZARQAWI'S NEPHEW SENTENCED

4. (U) On May 10, the State Security Court sentenced three men accused of plotting against American and Israeli tourists in Jordan, including Zarqawi's 19-year-old nephew, to three years in prison (ref d). Their attorney told the press they would appeal the verdict.

COMMENT

5. (U) The list of convictions in the State Security Court against Jordan-born Zarqawi and his cohorts continues to grow. Although the start date has not yet been announced,

the upcoming trial of another group of Zargawi affiliates -- arrested in April for planning a massive bomb attack against the Embassy and government buildings in Amman -- will present just one more reason to draw Zargawi's attention back home.

Visit Embassy Amman's classified web site at <http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/amman> or access the site through the State Department's SIPRNET home page.
GNEHM